

- 525 *Narrative 1.* In 1893 two Gros Ventre, enemy friends to each other, Red Whip
 572 who died in 1912 and Many Tail Feathers, got into a gambling game with the wheel.
 578 Many Tail Feathers was losing and he got angry. He grabbed Red Whip and they
 • 538 had a rough-and-tumble tussle. They fell to the ground, with Red Whip on top,
 astraddle Many Tail Feathers. Red Whip drew his knife, cut off all of the other's
 hair, at which loss the latter cried while the people cheered a cheer of contempt.
 Red Whip acting as if he had scalped an enemy, threw the hair in the air, and said
 in the hearing of all: "What's the matter with you, my friend? You must have a
 weak heart. Look at me. This is what I did to my enemy [such and such a time].
 You know all about it. I just wanted to show you that I am your superior in matters
 of this kind. But anyhow you can have that good horse of mine."

- [115] *Narrative 2.* Lame Bull, father of The Boy, our chief informant on gambling,
 died in 1908 at the age of 83 or 84 years. Lame Bull, when still a fairly young man,
 a rising one with prospects of rising higher and higher in the prestige scale, had been
 chosen as an enemy friend by White Owl, an older man, and Lame Bull had, accord-
 ing to custom, accepted the offer. An offer of enemy friendship was on the one
 hand almost mandatory, and on the other, where it came from an outstanding man
 of great experience and ability, as in this case, it was a real honor to the recipient
 and would rarely be refused.

When Lame Bull and White Owl became enemy friends, they "started to act like two roosters" and were saying to themselves: "I am going to get you when you are off your guard." Both knew that at some time or another, sooner or later, they would have to do something to put their enemy friendship to the greatest test. After much sparring around, the two men engaged in a wheel game as just such a climactic test. At this game White Owl had a big reputation (besides all his other accomplishments), while Lame Bull had no reputation at all at it.

On this occasion Lame Bull wagered everything he owned, and all his wife's property, including their lodge. As it was customary at such events for the kinsmen of the respective players to bet on their kinsman, Lame Bull's father, together with other relatives wagered large stakes on him, although the father was strongly opposed on principle to such betting and had always counseled Lame Bull strenuously against it. More, however, than large amounts of property was at stake; the players' relative and absolute standing in the tribe hung upon the outcome. In the case of Lame Bull and White Owl, the former a younger man of great promise, the latter an older one of recognized prominence, the rivalry was keen and, in a very true sense, ruthless. The older man was jealous of his great reputation and did not want any one to get near him in prestige. He was trying to crush Lame Bull's rising career before it was too late. Lame Bull might outdo him. At the same time, White Owl stood to profit even if he lost, for he would still be attached as enemy friend to Lame Bull and would have reflected prestige from being the enemy friend of this rising man. He would thus profit inevitably by the latter's prestige.

Lame Bull lost everything in the contest, and, of course, his father and relatives lost heavily. White Owl's people tore down Lame Bull's lodge and took it away as winnings and took everything in it, even down to the dishes of Lame Bull's wife. At the end of the playing, Lame Bull was an object of charity and a laughing stock.

GROS VENTRE GAMBLING

401

About the only thing that earned him a bit of recognition was the fact that in spite of his loss of property and of status—to have recognition at all you had to have some possessions to hold and to give away in presents—and in spite of the strutting and crowing and twitting by the winner and his followers after the playing was over, Lame Bull did not lose his temper. 525
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When the playing ended, Lame Bull had nothing of his own except his wife. So his father and mother invited them to eat. Downcast, embarrassed, ashamed, "feeling like a small potato," he ate. When he had finished, his father gave him such a tongue lashing that Lame Bull, who was very fond of his father, cried, and Lame Bull was a strong man who did not easily cry. He felt so bad that he went out on the hills and cried and cried, and slept out there, and came back a pretty sorry young man. And for a long time after, his wife, who also was one of his enemy friends, would throw this up to him: "Oh, you are nothing. You were always weak. Look what your enemy friend did to you. You will never amount to anything." And she would say such things to him especially when others were present. So she set about training him. At any rate Lame Bull was cured of gambling by his great loss to White Owl.

As time went on, Lame Bull recovered from the defeat which might have wrecked for good the career of another. His people had given him enough property to make a new start in life. He would invite White Owl to his lodge and give him big feasts and would make valuable presents of horses and such things to him. And White Owl would make a mental note of these things and would say to himself: "All right, my friend, you wait and see what I will do for you", awaiting the proper time to reciprocate, as was Gros Ventre custom. So a long time afterwards White Owl made very valuable presents to Lame Bull. And they were very good friends.

Narrative 3. Long ago, the story runs, a young Gros Ventre warrior went off alone on a war raid. He got to a mountain, and after nightfall went into a cave to camp overnight. On feeling around in the darkness he found some one else there, and said to himself: "An enemy." To make sure he asked by touching the skin of the other's forearm. The other by wiggling his finger on the Gros Ventre's chest signified: "I am a Snake Indian." So the Gros Ventre took the Snake's hand and made the sign of "big belly" to signify: "I am a Gros Ventre." 525
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The Gros Ventre then said to the Snake: "Let's not fight tonight. You go to sleep and I'll go to sleep. Tomorrow morning we'll see what we'll do." But being afraid of each other, neither slept at all during the night.

The next morning the Gros Ventre asked the Snake: "Friend, where were you going?" He replied: "On the war path." "Alone?" "Yes, all alone." The Snake then asked the same questions and got the same answers. Then the Gros Ventre said: "We are both alone. Instead of killing each other, let's gamble with the wheel. The loser loses his scalp to the winner."

So they started to play, with such things as bow and arrows and clothing for stakes, and the Snake won everything from the Gros Ventre. Then the Gros Ventre proposed: "Friend, you stake all you have won, in a lump, against my scalp," and this was agreed upon. At this point the Gros Ventre got afraid he would lose, so

525 he prayed to I'tcibiniq't'a, the Supreme Being: "Have pity on me, so I may bear
 648 this man. I'll make a Medicine Dance when I get back home." And as he prayed,
 538 he took his arrow and the wheel, and put the arrow on the winning bead of the wheel,
 and prayed to the Supreme Being that when the wheel was rolled it would fall just
 that way on the arrow. So when the Gros Ventre rolled the wheel, it fell as he had
 prayed it would, and he won back all that he had lost.

Then the two men started all over again, and this time the Gros Ventre won
 everything from the Snake. So the Snake in turn proposed: "Friend, you stake all
 you have won, in a lump, against my scalp." They played again and the Gros
 Ventre won.

The Snake then said: "Now you have won my scalp. Tie my head around [at
 the level of the forehead], then take your knife and cut, and pull off my scalp.
 And after my scalp is off, go to that hill yonder and wave it at me and sing. Then
 you go back home and I'll go back home." All this the Gros Ventre did. But
 before leaving, he said to the Snake: "My friend, you came from a long way off.
 So did I. It is bad enough that you have lost your scalp. So I am going to give
 you back some of your things that you'll need on your way back home." So the
 Gros Ventre gave him back his robe, moccasins, bow and arrow, and knife, saying:
 "You'll need these."

3. The 2-Button Hand Game

525 The wheel game, as played and gambled on in really big contests by outstand-
 ing enemy friends, was in some respects the supreme gambling game of the
 Gros Ventre. It was supreme at least in the intensity of interest it aroused as a
 spectacle and supreme in the value of what was won and lost, not merely the
 great amounts of property wagered, but, still more, such prestige and status or
 loss thereof as could make or break the contestants' careers. On the other
 hand, as regards everyday popularity, frequency of use, and range of partici-
 pation, first rank in the gambling complex was held, it clearly appears, by the
 old 2-button hand game, the predecessor of the modern non-gambling 4-button
 hand game. In the following pages we shall use the term "hand game" without
 qualification to designate this earlier pre-Ghost-Dance hand game proper.

The hand game could be played at nearly any time. There were no set
 occasions for it, though some were more favorable than others, especially inter-
 tribal gatherings. Commonly a game started just with some one proposing:
 "Let's gamble." So somebody would go to the nearest bush and cut the required
 twelve sticks, each about a foot in length, for counters. Sometimes the bark
 would then be peeled off the sticks and the ends thereof squared, but this was
 not necessary. Then agreement was reached on what would serve to hide as the
 two required "buttons"—such as a bit of "sun-shell" off an earring for the
 "short" button, and an end of horn off a bracelet for the "long" button. There